

Theology vol 98
The extensive Advantages of Navigation:

A
S E R M O N,

P REACHED IN THE
P A R I S H - C H U R C H
O F
St. NICHOLAS, in DEPTFORD,

On MONDAY the FIRST of JUNE, 1795,

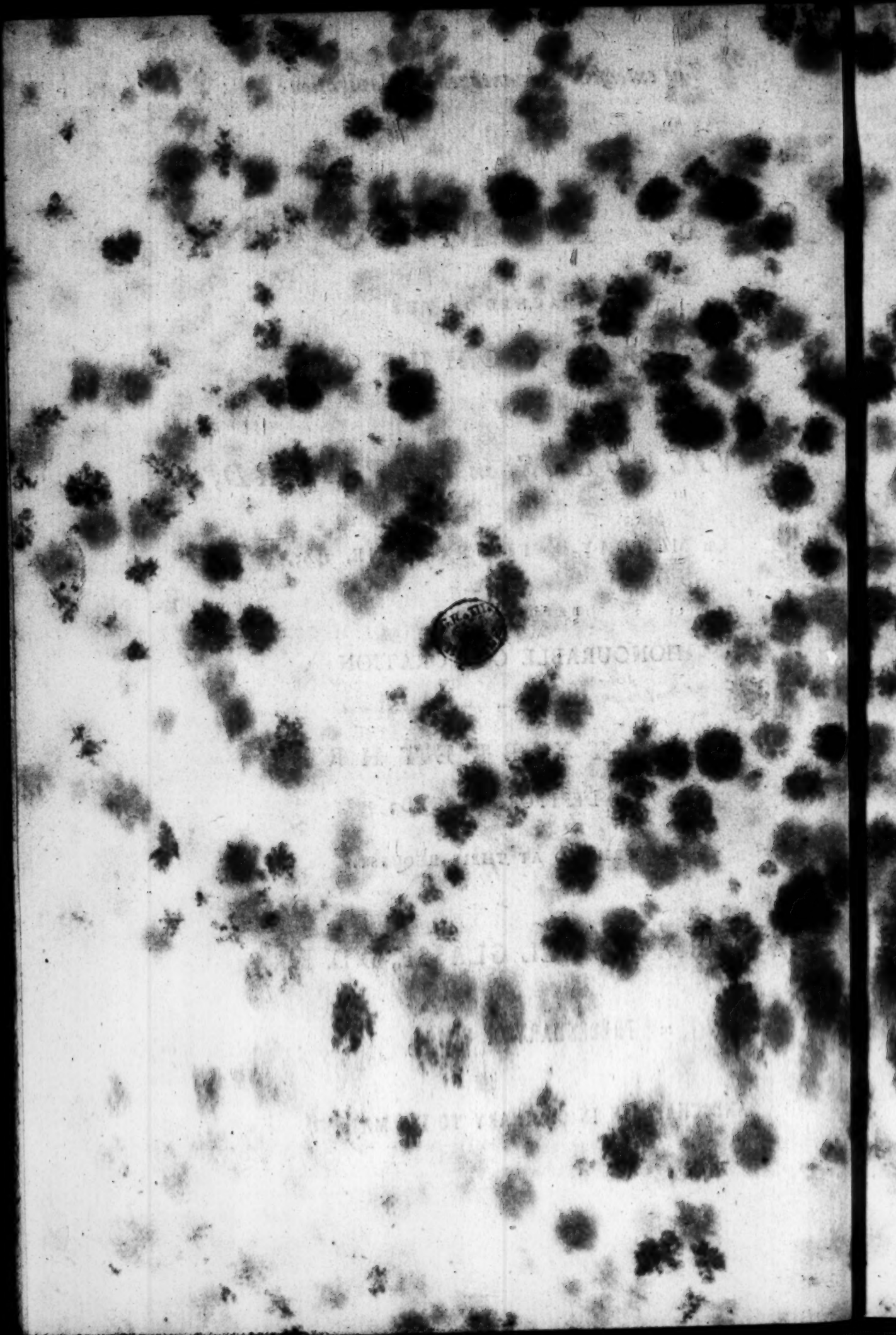
B E F O R E T H E
H O N O U R A B L E C O R P O R A T I O N
O F
T R I N I T Y B R E T H R E N
O F D E P T F O R D S T R O N D ;

A N D P R I N T E D A T T H E I R R E Q U E S T .

B Y T H E R E V . S A M U E L G L A S S E , D . D . F . R . S . *K*

—
P R E B E N D A R Y O F W E L L S ,

A N D C H A P L A I N I N O R D I N A R Y T O H I S M A J E S T Y .



TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE WILLIAM PITT,

MASTER,

ROBERT PRESTON, ESQ. M.P.

DEPUTY MASTER,

AND TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND REVEREND AND HIGHLY-RESPECTED

ELDER BRETHREN

OF THE

ANCIENT CORPORATION

OF THE

TRINITY-HOUSE, OF DEPTFORD STROND,

THE FOLLOWING SERMON,

PREACHED AT THEIR REQUEST

AND PRINTED BY THEIR COMMAND,

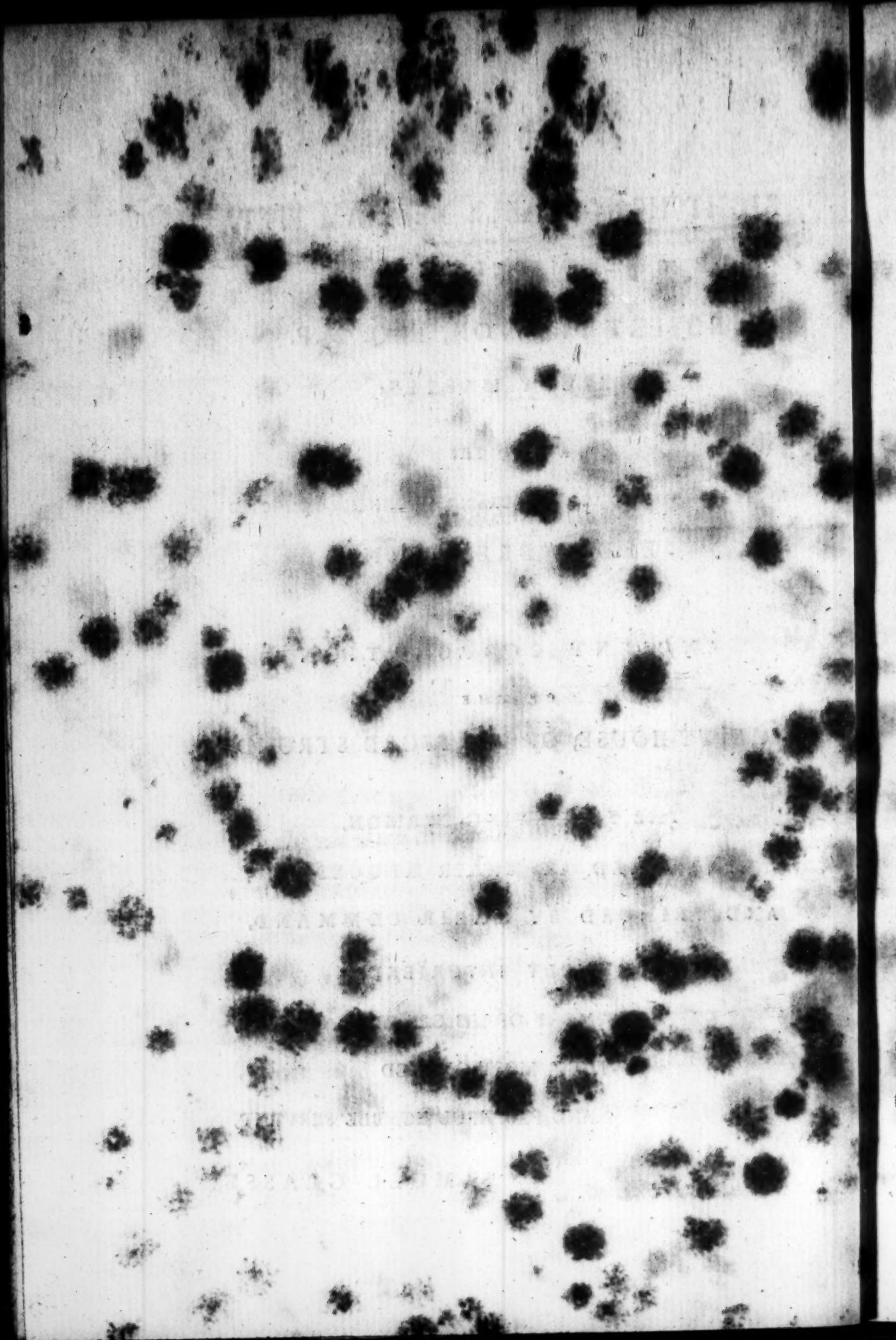
HUMBLY INSCRIBED,

AS THE LAST TESTIMONY OF HIS GRATEFUL FEELINGS,

BY THEIR MOST OBLIGED

AND FAITHFUL HUMBLE SERVANT,

SAMUEL GLASSE.



PSALM lxxii. Verse 8.

*He shall have Dominion from Sea to Sea, and from
the River unto the Ends of the Earth.*

IN this beautiful Psalm, or rather in this prophetic
Prayer, the venerable Monarch of Israel, about to resign
his kingdom into the hands of his son, Solomon, makes
such a request to GOD for him, as a wise and pious
father might reasonably be supposed to make for his son,
under similar circumstances. He implores such a portion
of wisdom and integrity from above, as might enable
the young Prince to govern aright the people of GOD;
and exhibit to the world a fair resemblance of HIM,
who, in the fullness of time, should reign in righteous-
ness, on the throne of his Father David, and of whose

B

kingdom

kingdom there should be no end. The Prayer of the Father was seconded by that of the Son himself. The History informs us, that, in *Gibeon*, the *LORD* appeared to *Solomon* in a dream by night : *And GOD said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast shewn to thy Servant David, my father, this great kindness, in that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne : Now, therefore, give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people ; that I may discern between good and bad. We are told that it pleased the LORD that Solomon had asked this thing : and that GOD gave him wisdom and understanding exceeding great ; and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore. His wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East-country, and all the wisdom of the Egyptians ; for he was wiser than all men, and his fame was in all nations round about. His knowledge of the Book of Nature, which reached from the hyssop on the wall, to the cedar of Lebanon, gives us some idea of his attainments in that particular branch of science ;*

science; and the magnificent Temple, that Wonder of the World, which He raised, convinces us of his superior wisdom in *architecture*. But that it was directed also towards *naval architecture*, we have the fullest evidence; the same GOD, who was pleased, in return to his prayer, to promise him all, and much more than he asked, we have reason to believe, suggested to him the most effectual means, whereby *riches* and *honour*, and *celebrity* throughout the world, might be obtained.

That these means were the establishment of a *naval power*, is beyond a question. By the help of this power it was, that GOD gave him *dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth*. By this power it was, that he was not only greater than all the Kings of Judah, both before and after him; but became the greatest and most magnificent Monarch in the world.

He received the homage of all the Princes of the *Mediterranean* islands; and his greatness was congratulated by Kings, whose dominions were in the remotest parts of the globe. *The Kings of Tarshish and of the Isles offered him gifts; the Kings of Arabia and Saba brought presents unto him.*

The naval preparations of this Monarch as much distinguished him in the eyes of foreign nations, as even the building of the Temple itself. The returns brought by his fleet from *Ophir*, of gold and precious stones, advanced his wealth to a prodigious height: we are told that *Silver in his time was accounted as nothing*; and that in one year he imported *six hundred threescore and six talents of gold*. Not only the Eastern Sultans were tributary to him; the inhabitants of many other countries became proselytes to the ordinances of the Jewish law; less, it is feared, out of love to the true religion, than for the sake of making their fortune in that splendid Court. They were glad on *any* terms to

become the subjects of a Prince, of such extraordinary wisdom and successful enterprise, as to be enabled to give laws to all the empires of the East.

Nor does the example of Solomon stand unsupported and alone; for whilst we impute the extent, the glory, and the riches of his kingdom, in a great measure, to his naval power, we behold other nations also arriving at a very considerable height of prosperity and eminence by the same steps. The inhabitants of Tyre are described as advanced to a state of distinguished greatness by their attention to the business of *navigation*. Tyre is, by the prophet Isaiah, styled the *crowning city*; whose *merchants* were *Princes*, in respect to their opulence and authority, and whose *traffickers* were the *honourable of the earth*: her mariners and shipwrights were collected from all cities and countries, both far and near. They were the only carriers for other nations; and their city was the emporium of the world.

But

But mark, I pray you, the effects of their grandeur and prosperity. *Son of Man*, saith GOD to his prophet Ezekiel*, *say thou to the Prince of Tyre, Thus saith the LORD GOD: because thine heart is lifted up, and thou hast said, "I am a GOD, I sit in the midst of the seas, in the seat of GOD,"—I will bring strangers upon thee, terrible of the nations; and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness: and I will cast thee to the ground, and will bring thee to ashes upon the earth, in the sight of all them that behold thee.*

Need I suggest to my present hearers the importance of the admonition here given to every nation, which may be tempted, by conscious superiority, to a vain confidence, and an unwarrantable security? Need I point out to them the truth and importance of that observation of Solomon, as exemplified in the fate of this arrogant and vaunting city of Tyre; that *pride goeth before a fall*; and that *sin*, if generally prevalent, is not only the

disgrace,

disgrace, but the *ruin* of a *nation*? It is a little remarkable, that from the time of Solomon's defection from the true religion, and from the moment of his idolatrous attachments, the glory of his kingdom declined, and its former splendor and magnificence were tarnished.

As to the effects of *naval exertions* in our own country, permit me only to observe, that *one of our Saxon Kings raised by these means the fame and reputation of his people above all that were before him. A terror to pirates from the north and from the west, he is said annually to have cleared the seas of them, being possessed of a fleet in number beyond all imagination, not less than 3600 vessels. Whether this computation be accurate or otherwise, certain it is, that thereby he obtained the dominion of the four seas; that he was the joy and glory of his subjects at home, and the terror of his enemies abroad.

* King Egbert.

Hitherto

Hitherto we have considered the effects of naval power, only so far as the interests of the *present* world concerned: and we find it to have been, in all ages, the source of security and prosperity, of riches, aggrandisement, and dominion. It remains to be shewn, that the *prophecy* in my text, which extended itself far beyond the person and kingdom of Solomon, even to the enlargement of Christ's *spiritual* kingdom, could never have been accomplished, but by the means of maritime assistance: how otherwise could the sound of the Gospel have gone forth into all lands, or the doctrines and precepts of its Divine Author, to the ends of the world? How otherwise could His dominion have been *from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth*? We cannot but have observed, in the Gospel-history, how materially indebted were the cities and towns in the neighbourhood of the sea of *Tiberias*, for those means of conveyance by which the Divine Instructor of mankind condescended to be wafted from one shore to another, in the course of his ministry among men;

men; and with what amazing rapidity was the knowledge of the truth afterwards communicated, through these means, to nations which, however celebrated in the annals of literature, were, with respect to religious information, overwhelmed in darkness, ignorance, and error! Not to mention the regions of *Macedonia* and all *Greece*, of *Asia*, of *Italy*, *Spain*, and *Gaul*, is not our own highly-privileged nation indebted to that ease of communication effected by nautical skill, for its participation of divine light, through the unwearied labours of the chiefest of the Apostles? Before the promulgation of the Gospel amongst us, this Island, now illuminated beyond any other portion of the earth, came strictly within Job's description of the regions of the grave—*It was a land of darkness, and of the shadow of death, and without any order; and where the light which was in it, was as darkness*; its religion, such as it was, being full of monstrous absurdities, and ceremonies little short of the grossest impieties. With gratitude we recall to our memory that joyful period, when life and immortality

C

were

were brought to light, in this land, by the Gospel. May we all have grace to *walk* in the *light*, as *children of the light*, and *have no fellowship with the works of darkness!* It was on this occasion that the promise made by God the Father to his Son, in his character of the Messiah, was fulfilled; who had said, *I will give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession.*

These very important considerations, wherein are involved not only the blessings of the present life, but also those of the world to come, lead us immediately to reflect on the very honourable vocation of those persons, whose *Naval* profession tends so materially to the public good; which is not only instrumental in communicating riches, power, fame, and magnificence, to our country, with every thing that can make a Prince and people happy, and, under the Divine blessing, tends to *secure the continuance* of these advantages; but which, as we have shewn, has been found ready to take

take its share in imparting *greater* benefits than the heart of man can duly estimate ; blessings, in which the interests of our immortal souls are concerned.

It was an observation of a very celebrated writer, and it is peculiarly worthy of a place in this Discourse, that "the meanest sailor in a ship is an excellent servant to his King and Country." If any doubt existed in our minds respecting this observation, the glorious event of this ever-memorable day* must abundantly convince us of its truth : an event, which gave a brilliancy to the naval character, through all its ranks and degrees, which nothing can efface from the grateful memory of Britons ; but which will entitle it to the highest estimation and regard, even to our latest posterity. A brave and skilful seaman ought to be respected for his calling's sake, especially in a country bordered by the sea ; which, without ships, would be continually exposed to piracy and invasion, and become the most miserable habitation

C 2

upon

* The First of June, 1794, will ever be distinguished by the splendid victory obtained by Earl Howe over the French Fleet.

upon the face of the earth. Historians, the same writer adds, talk much of steep inaccessible rocks, as Britain's security; and tell us she is fortified by Nature against her enemies: but not all the fortifications of Nature would secure us, without a powerful Navy, and stout and active seamen in it; without those floating castles, which are a surer defence to our Island, than if she were walled about with *the Alps*.

If then the profession of a Seaman be thus honourable, and they who dedicate their time and attention to the great business of Navigation so deservedly demand our esteem and grateful respect, it necessarily follows, that we cannot too highly estimate the utility and excellence of that ancient and honourable Institution, which calls us together this day; on the benefits of which to the Community I have too frequently enlarged, to make it necessary for you to waste your time in hearing them repeated. Every one, I presume, in this Assembly, knows, that the great object of your care is, *the general security*

Security of Navigation—the maintenance of decayed Seamen in ease and comfort, and in a state of pious retirement—and a kind and charitable provision for the representatives of such as have lost their lives in the public service. It is the prospect of what he shall receive, if he survive the toil and hazard of his profession; and also of what *they* shall receive who are most dear to him, in case he should fall in the discharge of his duty, which encourages the Seaman, first, to engage in this useful but hazardous course of life, and then, to display such valour and intrepidity, when called upon to contribute his endeavours to enrich, defend, and aggrandise his country.

With great wisdom is the management of the vast concerns of this Corporation vested in such persons, as I am permitted, at this moment, to address; whom neither interest, nor advantage, nor any sinister consideration whatsoever, could possibly induce to swerve from the most upright attention to the great objects of its institution.

In

In this honourable work, one very respectable individual* sustained, for many years, a considerable share, with great reputation to himself, and great advantage to the Corporation; whose loss, in the course of the preceding year, not merely friendship, but justice, calls upon me sincerely to lament; whilst I cannot but acknowledge the satisfaction, which, I doubt not, is generally felt, in finding his station so honourably filled, and his loss so worthily supplied. Nor will this Corporation ever want able conductors of its affairs, so long as its Members are impressed with a due sense of the very high rank which it sustains in the class of Public and National Institutions.

I shall, I think, fall short of my duty, on this occasion, if, having observed how useful Navigation hath proved in propagating the Gospel, and advancing the Kingdom of Christ, I should not lament, as I do, the too general want of religion in the lower orders of the people,

* The late worthy Deputy-Master, Hector Rose, Esq.

people, who go down to the sea in ships, and occupy themselves in business in great waters: these men see indeed the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep; but they are sadly deficient in their reverence of Him, who lifteth up by his power, and by his word asswages, the waves thereof.

I shall then be forgiven, if I venture to recommend a strict enforcement of the existing laws, so far as the religious care of our brave countrymen is concerned; whom GOD forbid that they should ever be justly reproached, as little better than Heathens! whom GOD forbid that they should ever, by their impiety, put themselves out of the Divine protection!

When the fugitive Prophet* lay sleeping in the midst of the storm, the Ship-master, though an Heathen, calls upon him, *Awake, thou sleeper; arise, and call upon thy GOD; if so be that GOD will think upon us, that we perish not.* How far this conduct, which we have no reason

* Jonah, chap. i, ver. 6.

reason to believe was insincere or superstitious, is adopted by *Christian Seamen*, under similar circumstances, I cannot presume to say; I can only say, that an excellent Form of Prayer is provided for Persons in such a perilous situation: and I would not wish to insinuate, that it is not applied and made use of as the case requires; because I would not insinuate any thing to the disadvantage of an Order of Men, whom, as I have observed, we have so just reason to admire and esteem. In proportion, however, to that esteem must be our anxious desire, that they should be every thing that they ought to be.

And surely it would be much for the honour of Christianity, and tend greatly to the advancement of Christ's kingdom, amongst this class of our fellow-subjects, if any way could be found for the better instruction of common Seamen in the duties of religion; if the due performance of divine service on shipboard were as universally established as the law directs; if

every discouragement were shewn by Commanders to open and daring profaneness; and if they who are accustomed to *fear nothing*, but what is base, ungenerous, and dishonourable, were taught also that nothing is so truly magnanimous as THE FEAR OF GOD.

It would well become the public wisdom of any Christian nation to exert its endeavours in this respect: and those endeavours are never, I am persuaded, more likely to be applied than at the present moment, and under the present administration of our naval concerns.

It cannot surely be esteemed a reflexion on our wisdom, any department, however apparently unconnected with religion, to take care that its duties are never neglected, except in cases of absolute and unavoidable necessity: but that they be strictly performed on such principles as the conscience cannot but approve, and the laws of GOD and Man have, with so much wisdom, established. In a word, nothing can do greater
D honour
every

honour to ourselves, nothing can more effectually secure the Divine favour, assistance, and protection, than a strict conformity to the Apostle's advice, which meets us even in the *ordinary* occurrences of every day of our lives: "*Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of GOD.*"

To whom, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the ever-blessed Trinity in Unity, be ascribed all honour, glory, praise, and dominion, world without end. Amen.



THE END.

